

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3173

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

UNCLAS DUSSELDORF 0983

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, ENRG, GW

SUBJECT: FRG ENERGY POLICY: NORTHRHINE-WESTPHALIA HAS OWN IDEAS

REF: (A) DUSSELDORF 0092, (B) BONN 8586

1. WITH A VIEW TO THE FORTHCOMING BUNDESTAG DEBATE ON THE FRG
ENERGY PROGRAM, REF (B), THE NORTHRHINE-WESTPHALIAN (NRW)
GOVERNMENT RECENTLY REAFFIRMED ITS POSITION WHICH DEVIATES
FROM THAT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN THE FOLLOWING MAJOR
POINTS:

(A) NRW WANTS A LARGER ROLE FOR DOMESTIC COAL THAN PROVIDED
FOR IN THE FRG ENERGY PROGRAM, ESPECIALLY IN ELECTRIC POWER
GENERATION. THIS POSITION IS PRIMARILY DETERMINED BY THE
FACT THAT SOME 90 PERCENT OF ALL GERMAN COAL IS MINED IN NRW AND
THAT THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS
IN THE MINING AREAS WHICH COULD BE OVERCOME, AT LEAST IN
PART, BY STEPPED-UP USE OF COAL;

(B) LARGELY AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE REQUESTED PRIORITY
FOR COAL IN THE ELECTRIC POWER MARKET, NRW PUTS LESS
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EMPHASIS ON NUCLEAR ENERGY THAN THE BONN GOVERNMENT. NRW
AGREES WITH BONN THAT MORE NUCLEAR ENERGY WILL BE
NEEDED BUT LATER AND LESS THAN THE FRG ENERGY
PROGRAM CALLS FOR. NRW INSISTS THAT NO NEW NUCLEAR
POWER PLANT PROJECTS BE STARTED BEFORE PERMISSION FOR
CONSTRUCTION OF APPROPRIATE NUCLEAR FUEL REPROCESSING
AND WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITIES HAS BEEN GRANTED. THIS

WOULD AMOUNT TO A MORATORIUM OF SEVERAL YEARS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS;

(C) NRW ARGUES THAT ELECTRICITY FROM COAL CAN FILL ANY GAP IN THE AVAILABILITY OF NUCLEAR POWER THAT MIGHT DEVELOP THROUGH THE MID- 1980'S PROVIDED NEW COAL-FIRED POWER PLANTS ARE BUILT EARLY ENOUGH AND IN SUFFICIENT NUMBER;

(D) IN ORDER TO ENABLE GERMAN COAL MINES TO SATISFY THE ADDITIONAL NEEDS, NRW SEEKS AN INCREASE IN THE DOMESTIC COAL PRODUCTION CAPACITY FROM THE PRESENT 94 MILLION TONS (IDENTICAL WITH THE FRG ENERGY PROGRAM PRODUCTIONS TARGET FIGURE) TO 100 MILLION TONS;

(E) NRW IS MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN BONN ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY AND DESIRABILITY OF IMPORTING ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS OF COAL FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES.

(F) FINALLY, THE NRW GOV'T. IS MORE INCLINED THAN THE FEDERAL GOVT TOWARD INTERVENTION IN THE ENERGY MARKET, REALIZING THAT IT WILL OTHERWISE BE DIFFICULT TO ASSURE A GREATER MARKET SHARE FOR DOMESTIC COAL.

2. COMMENT: RE PARA 1,D ABOVE, NEITHER THE COAL INDUSTRY NOR THE MINEWORKERS ARE PRESSING WITH PARTICULAR VIGOR FOR AN UPWARD REVISION OF THE COAL PRODUCTION TARGET FIGURE. ACTUAL COAL OUTPUT IN 1976 WAS ONLY 89 MILLION TONS, REFLECTING THE RELATIVELY POOR DEMAND FROM STEEL MILLS.DUX
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